

Hampton population continues to grow

June 11, 2111 -- Although Census numbers show a decline in Hampton's population from 2000 to 2010, the city is actually growing.

"There has been a steady, incremental increase in population. Hampton isn't any different than the trends you see in the other core cities in the region," says Jackie Stephan, city planning analyst.

The 2010 Census reported that the city's population had decreased by 6.1 percent, or 9,000 people, since the 2000 Census. That doesn't match [the city's figures](#).

Stephan analyzed the numbers reported by the U.S. Census to find the discrepancies. She discovered more than 3,300 people in two areas that weren't counted in 2010. The disparity is exaggerated, though, by an overcount that artificially inflated the 2000 population. In 2000, the Census Bureau listed 8,000 prisoners in jail at Langley Air Force Base. The problem: Langley doesn't even *have* a military jail. At the same time, the 2000 Census reported that the residential population of the base decreased by over 2,400, which didn't appear likely.

City officials contacted Census officials after the 2000 error of 8,000 inmates was discovered. At the time, Census officials responded that the numbers had been "spotted as an anomaly" but said they had "insufficient data to change the count."

The two other areas that showed double-digit percentage drops were Fort Monroe, which is drawing down to close as an Army base, and the Census tract that includes Hampton University and the Veterans Affairs Hospital, which also may have been undercounted.

If you look at [full-time residents of the city](#) (by removing those three Census tracts with federal and student housing populations), you see steady growth from 1990-2010 (in blue).

Other areas of the city saw people moving in, led by the northwestern portion, where population growth ranged from 7 to 27 percent.

"That's where most of the vacant land was over the last decade, and it was planned for residential growth," said Stephan.

What's next?

Hampton will formally challenge the 2010 Census results.

[A map of the city's Census tracts, showing growth or declines from 2000-2010.](#)